

THE ARIZONA REPUBLICAN

Published Every Day in the Year by
THE
ARIZONA PUBLISHING COMPANY.

S. W. HIGLEY
President.

SIMS ELY
Secretary-Treasurer and General
Manager.

Exclusive Morning Associated Press
Dispatches.
Publication office: Corner Second
and Adams Sts.
Entered at the Postoffice at Phoenix,
Arizona, as mail matter of the second
class.
Address all communications to The
Republican, Phoenix, Arizona.

TELEPHONES.

Consolidated.....Main 47
Overland, Business Office.....422
Overland, City Editor.....432

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

By mail, daily, one year.....\$9.00
By carrier, daily, per month.....75
Sundays only, one year.....2.50

PHOENIX, ARIZONA, NOV. 30, 1910.

The Latest Phase of the Sewer Question.

In deciding to take an advisory vote of the taxpayers of the city on the question whether the existing sewer system shall be purchased for \$60,000, the city council has taken a proper course.

Whether, however, the voters should authorize the purchase of the sewer plant for the sum named is another thing. It is a question which ought to have the most careful consideration.

Two objections, which to us have appeared sound, have hitherto been urged against a purchase of the existing plant:

1. That the conduits are not sufficiently deep in the ground to make them available as part of an adequate and modern system for the entire city.

2. That in any event the owners of the plant ask too much for it; that its physical condition has so deteriorated that the original cost of installing it is not a good basis on which to figure its value.

As to the first objection, the council seems to have reached the conclusion that a moderately shallow system is the best adapted to the needs of the city, everything considered. It is a fact that the plane of underground water has risen materially during the past seven or eight years. In some parts of the city, for example, water is now encountered at a depth of approximately ten feet from the surface, whereas it was formerly more than twice that depth. It is not considered by engineers as probable, however, that the water plane will rise much, if any, higher. It will recede, in fact, after the installation of a complete sewer system and the abandonment of the hundreds of cesspools now in use. But the council seems to be of the opinion that the requirements from deep basements will never be great enough to justify the additional cost of a deep system of conduits, and possibly this is a correct view to take of it.

Concerning the second objection, however, there is no evidence at hand that it has been met. There has not been such a physical valuation of the property by unbiased engineers as would serve as a basis for voters to get any idea of the property's true value. The statement made by the owners, that the property is earning a net profit of 20 per cent on a valuation of \$60,000, is scarcely worth consideration, as the fact, if it be a fact, has no true relation to the price the city should pay.

It is repugnant to every idea of justice that a corporation operating a public utility and in the enjoyment of a monopoly by grace of the people should be enabled to capitalize exorbitant earnings and say to the public, in effect: "You have given us a monopoly of your streets for many years, and by virtue of this monopoly we have made great profits; now, if we sell the plant to you, we must value the plant on the basis of the earnings you have given us."

If the sewer plant is to be purchased, it ought, it seems to us, to be purchased on the basis of its actual, physical value, and not on the basis of its earning value as a monopoly. Reliable citizens, who are familiar with the details of construction of the sewer system as it stands, insist that the cost did not exceed forty thousand dollars. They are not unwilling to make any concession because of unquestioned depreciation of plant, but in fact want to fix the selling price at a figure 50 per cent above original cost—notwithstanding the fact that the original investment has been returned in net earnings, several times over.

The situation is complicated, to be sure, by the supposed strategic position of the sewer company. The city has already voted a bond issue of four hundred thousand dollars for a sewer system. The sewer company has instituted a suit to prevent a sale of the bonds, on the ground that the city has heretofore granted a monopoly to the sewer company and may not now break the contract. Whether the suit has merit is a question for the lawyers. If the sewer company

is in a legal position to work a hold-up game on the city, it is of course worth while for the city to do some negotiating. But it is not wise to jump at the conclusion that the sum of sixty thousand dollars, or anything near that sum, need be paid.

It is pertinent to recall that if the city administration had exercised some skill in negotiation at the time the city water plant was purchased, a huge sum could have been saved. The owner of the water plant was enabled to outmaneuver the city, and unload upon it, for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, a property that could have been purchased for half that sum.

Incidentally, but an altogether material fact in this connection, is that the city would find it a good investment to employ, and pay for, the best legal advice all the time.

What Lesson Was Intended?

A leather medal, as a testimonial of public appreciation, should be donated by somebody to the enterprising gentlemen responsible for the "edifying" spectacle which was witnessed on the streets of Phoenix yesterday.

A young man, found guilty some months ago by a jury of twelve men on his trial for perjury, and sentenced therefor by the district court of Maricopa county to a term in the penitentiary—sentence having been imposed after a full hearing of an application for a new trial—had been pardoned by the acting governor. In our judgment, and we believe, in the judgment of the community generally, the pardon was properly issued, in consideration of all the facts and circumstances of the case. There were certain palliating circumstances, which the court itself took into consideration, and accordingly imposed an indeterminate sentence.

The young man, returning from prison like a conqueror, was met at the station by certain "prominent" citizens and a brass band, and escorted through the streets, followed by many school children.

The interesting feature of the incident, apart from the exhibition of excellent taste by the aforesaid "prominent" citizens—and the feature which prompts us to make this comment—was the presence of the school children. On whose initiative were they there? What lesson for the school children did the gentlemen in charge of the exhibition intend?

The Influential Transients.

The Democrat makes a good point of the fact that the most radical element in the constitutional convention comprises the delegates who have been but a short time in the territory and have but slight material interests in the territory.

The old-timers of Arizona are not the radicals. There are many old-timers in the convention, and if it were left to them to write the constitution it would be a document satisfactory to a substantial majority of the people. But for reasons which nobody seems able to explain, the radicals, who in fairness may be classed practically as transients, are holding in leading strings the real representatives of the people of Arizona.

The bidding of the radicals is done with regularity.

WIFE MAKES ANSWER DENIES ALLEGATIONS

Marital Troubles of the Antones, the
Gossip of Indian Society.

Sometime ago Jose Antone filed a suit in the district court against Louisa Antone, praying for a divorce and alleging that the defendant had peremptorily ordered him from their happy home which was located at Gila crossing, both being Indians but of some education, sufficient at least to have been joined in marriage with the white man's chains.

Yesterday Louisa Antone filed a demurrer and a general denial of all the allegations made by the complainant. The demurrer says that the complaint does not state sufficient facts for a cause of action. It is whispered around by dame gossip among the best circles of Indian society that the real grievance of Jose is that he has for a long time cherished a deep affection for one Effie Rhodes, an Indian woman of years so mature as to have permitted her becoming a grandmother, and that he pines to be liberated from his lawful wife that he may give his name to another.

Meantime Effie Rhodes has won considerable fame as a culinary artist and is known as the highest priced Indian cook in these parts. It may be her mince pies that have won the heart of Jose. Louisa avers that she has been just as faithful and loving a wife to Jose as he would permit her to be.

SOMETHING TO INTEREST HIM.

It was the evening when her weekly caller always made his appearance. "I wish I had something new and entertaining to show him," said the girl to her mother.

"If you'd only mentioned it in time," said her father. "I'd have brought home my account book with the dry goods, millinery stationery and confectionary bills for the last three months all itemized and balanced. I'll venture to say that would entertain him."—Youth's Companion.

ARRANGING FOR THE OSBORN INSTITUTE

The Home People Are Preparing to
Help Out the Professors.

When Professor Clothier and his corps of farmers' institute workers get around to the Osborn school district next Tuesday they may expect to find the most hospitable welcome imaginable, for the district is going to spread itself on that occasion.

The lecture program will be held afternoon and evening and every farmer in the world, including those who don't work at it only when they have to, together with the farmers' wives and children and all the townsmen who would like to be farmers if they could, are invited to attend. It is known that the gentlemen who will address the institute will have a fine program, but on every such occasion there is apt to be a little time wasted between acts, while the speakers are clearing their throats, etc. There will be none of that in the Osborn district, for the meeting is to be held in the auditorium of the school house, believed to be big enough to accommodate all who will attend, and between the program events arranged for the institute, Osborn's young America will be heard from. There will be give club music and the children will give songs and recitations. At the night session particularly the program will be replete with these events and the meeting will be presided over by Dwight H. Heard, who will lead the chorus in the yell that everybody in Osborn district is a farmer and is proud of it.

CREAMED APPLE PIE.

The use of cream in making apple pie is a novelty, but it gives a delicious bit of pastry. The pie must not be baked too fast or the cream will curdle. Line the pie plate with the crust, fill with sliced tart apples, sift a teaspoonful of flour over them, add sugar to taste, pour a cup of rich cream over and sprinkle with a little grated nutmeg. Bake in a moderate oven until the apples are done.

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